/145/

/Pl. I faces p. 145./

The last group of Uru Indians living in the village of Iru-Itu, or Angoake, on the banks of the Desaguadero, about 25 kilometers from Lake Titicaca, has almost entirely disappeared in the course of the last years.

A long period of drought between 1940 and 1945 has lowered the level of Lake Titicaca by more than three meters; at many points the water has receded several hundred meters.

At the time of my first trip in 1938, the village of Iru-Itu had about 100 inhabitants; the Desaguadero went through vast swamps dotted with numerous ponds and lagoons with a great abundance of totora beds /totorales/. In 1941 a plain of sterile sand had replaced the swamps and fields of reeds; the Desaguadero was reduced to a narrow, muddy ditch.

Because of this the Uru have lost practically all their means of existence. The swamps covered with reeds, the totora beds, furnished them with the Scirpus necessary to make their fishing balsas and to cover their houses and served as shelter for numerous aquatic fauna: fish, suches (Trichomycterus dispar and rivulatus), bogas, hispe, carache (various Orestias), and birds sought by the Indians for their meat and eggs. Their entire economy, based partly on hunting and fishing and partly on the sale of totora fishing balsas and mats to the neighboring Indians, has thus been destroyed.

Many of the Uru are dead. Others, the young ones, have dispersed, mingling with the neighboring Aymara groups; some have joined the Lake Titicaca fishers. The old ones, *more attached to their customs and their /146/ traditions and* incapable of adapting themselves to new conditions of existence, have remained in the dead village.

In 1944 most of the houses had been abandoned; the totora roofs could not be repaired for lack of reeds, and many had given way. Only 21 people remained in the village; several women were of Aymara origin, and the few children were in part Uru-Aymara half-breeds.

/170 cont./

*539 731 178 433 511 23. We are going to sell them to the people of the other race, at three for one real.

/171/ Remarks

*539 731 178 161 433 This account, dictated by an old Uru about 90 years old, Manuel Inta, is a commentary on the wide dispersal of the Uru, undoubtedly permanent, after a series of years of drought, 1940 to 1946. In 1944 there were only a few old people in their old village of Iru-Itu. The drought had destroyed the vast swamps of the Desaguadero and their reed fields, the source of all the activity of these Indians, bringing about the disappearance of the conditions which had made it possible for them to maintain their ethnic individuality in the midst of the Aymara populations. These complaints express the bitterness of the old Urus, fishers and gatherers, obliged, in order not to starve to death, to change their economy, working [169] in the fields of their Aymara neighbors. The young Urus have dispersed, some having mingled with the Aymara or Amaracized fishers of Lake Titicaca, others having established themselves in Aymara villages or communities.

*539 142 193 [161] wáki, Bolivian village of Guaqui, on the small lake. ǒx'ŧa, literally, "different," the people of another race, the Aymaras. Note the particle čᵘ intercalated between the root and the ending of the verb: Káya -čúčay, tánáču-čay, lúxkáču -čay, in order to reinforce the idea expressed by the verb and to indicate a customary action. The particle ki intercalated between the root of the verb and the ending čay indicates the future. The verb Káči- čay means "to engage in business," "to sell" as well as "to buy," or "to earn money." tumíni, a tomin (old Spanish coin): a word unknown to the present lake Aymaras but still used by some natives of the Puno region.

*539 194 Note three other Hispanicisms: 1. kustúmbre, "custom"; 5. isú-čay, esto or eso, "that"; 17. ni-únu, "this alone," from the Spanish uno, "one."

/192 cont./

114 Outside of Posnansky's small Chipaya group, no informa-
141 tion exists on height or body measurements in these groups to our knowledge.

126 We ourselves prepared only a very short series: six men and three women, all adults. The fact that we are dealing
[162] with the last Uru must not be forgotten. Outside these nine subjects, there were no other Uru adults at Iru-Itu other than a young Uru woman about 30 years old and two very old women whom it was impossible to measure and who allowed themselves to be photographed only with difficulty. The children were
[144] largely Uru-Aymara half-breeds. The consanguinity of most of our subjects is another inconvenience of this small series.

121 In spite of these defects it seemed necessary to us to publish our results, which allow useful comparisons with the works of Posnansky and Imbelloni and will without doubt be the last
[167] observations on this group. Some other Uru are scattered in the region and already incorporated into the Aymara populations; their affiliation will be difficult to establish.

114 It is regrettable that the ethnographers who visited the
126 region when the Uru were still numerous did not seek to obtain a few essential anthropometric measurements. However, it must be recognized that working conditions were not very favorable; the Uru proved to be opposed to any examination of this type, and the cold climate as well as their heavy, woolen garments were also obstacles difficult to overcome. Patient negotiations were necessary, for example, in order to get some of them to allow themselves to be photographed without their woolen caps, and most refused.

162 /193/ In 1942 the population of Iru-Itu was as follows:
--- 6 men, whose ages varied between 40 and 95 years.
--- 6 women between 30 and 90 years old.
--- 9 children, 5 boys and 4 girls, between 4 and 15 years old.